

STATE OF COLORADO

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To: MNT Task Force Steering Committee
From: Dave Deluhery
Subject: Edge Site Development Issues for DOR
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Issue: The MNT Technical Team and QWest are pressuring agencies to set up their edge sites as quick as possible however, they are **not** providing the full switch configuration services required to do this.

Agencies must either divert their staff (if they have staff with the skill set) to a significant network conversion project or hire a contractor to perform this service. In DOR's case, this is outside of existing budget parameters, which means that there is NO money allocated to pay for this at the agency level.

Background: Every state agency that owns an MNT Edge site is being asked to install a standard model Cisco 6509 switch. This switch will provide the new connectivity between the agencies' LANs and their WANs on the MNT. The MNT technical team promises to configure the switch and reconfigure all the circuits through the switch for the agency, however, the actual performance is falling short, leaving agencies with no connectivity between their LANs and WANs, or with double payments as they keep the old circuits during the transition. Agencies must also pick up the slack to configure the switch themselves and pay double for their telecommunication lines after 30 days.

Problem Causes or Contributing Factors:

- ❑ It appears that a disconnect exists between agency and CGTS expectations and the QWest statement of work (SOW). The agencies expect the switch configuration to give them the same connectivity and functionality they had before the new switch on all their circuits. Quest's statement of work **only** requires that they establish connectivity between the switch and the MNT cloud for the circuits that are ready to transition the day the switch goes in.
- ❑ The new switch is very sophisticated and offers the possibility of greatly enhanced security and network performance if agencies understood what to ask for.
- ❑ The new switch is very sophisticated and agencies may need to adjust their network design to work effectively with their existing LAN and WAN equipment.
- ❑ Most agencies do not have staff on hand with the expertise to configure the 6509 switch. They must either invest in Cisco training, or they must hire someone else to do the work.
- ❑ Once the new switch arrives, QWest starts billing the new circuits after 30 days, whether they have been installed or not.

- ❑ The QWest/CGTS team does not have a perfect track record for converting circuits to a new configuration with no downtime. Most agencies have more than 10 circuits, with some, like DOR, having more than 100 circuits.

Possible Proactive Solutions:

- ❑ Steve Williams at Cisco has offered free consulting to agencies that need to redesign their networks around this switch. It would be helpful if the MNT Technical team would advertise that service and incorporate time for agencies to go through that process as part of their edge site conversions.
- ❑ The MNT Technical team could offer a generic project plan that they tailor with each agency that realistically identifies all the steps to moving to these new switches based on experience with the agencies ***they have already converted***. This plan could also incorporate reasonable time frames, based on past experience, for each step. Better planning would show the full scope and cost of this transition.
- ❑ Develop a collective budget request for additional funds to pay for contractors to configure the switch, OR have the MNT technical team develop a budget request for all the agencies so they can provide a more centralized service.
- ❑ Negotiate with QWest to break the link between the new switch installation and billing for transitioned circuits, or extend the time for transition from one month to 6 months. This allows agencies to move circuits a few at a time (allowing for testing and concurrent operations on the new and old equipment) and takes some of the pressure off QWest to change so many circuits all at once.
- ❑ Negotiate a change in the QWest contract and statement of work (SOW) to fully configure the new switches based on providing the same connectivity and performance on all of an agency's circuits before the transition.
- ❑ Negotiate with Cisco to provide more in depth engineering and consulting services that just one person suggesting one optimum network design as part of the MNT contract.
- ❑ Modify the telecommunications statewide price agreement to allow the purchase of services without equipment. Currently, Cisco network experts are only available under state agreements if their work is accompanied by a hardware purchase, so agencies must go through a competitive process if the total bill is likely to exceed \$25,000.
- ❑ Expand the MNT technical team planning for each Edge Site to include identification of potential cost savings through network redesign. The MNT Technical team with their partners in QWest and Cisco are in a better position to help uncover these opportunities than the agencies themselves.

I look forward to working with the MNT Project and Technical Teams in order to ensure a smooth transition of DOR circuits to the new MNT switch architecture and appreciate the time of the Task Force to discuss this issue with the QWest statement of work.

Dave